

Real-time measurement of pelvis and trunk kinematics during treadmill locomotion using a low-cost depthsensing camera: A concurrent validity study

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1 2 3	Real-time measurement using a low-cost depth-se	of pelvis and trunk kinematics during treadmill locomotion nsing camera: A concurrent validity study
4	Short Communication	
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18 Abstract

19 There is currently no suitable kinematic system for a large-scale prospective trial assessing 20 risk factors of musculoskeletal disorders. A practical kinematic system is described which involves the use of a single low-cost depth-sensing camera for the real-time measurement of 21 3-dimensional linear and angular pelvic and trunk range-of-movement (ROM). The method is 22 based on the creation and processing of dynamic point clouds taken from the posterior 23 24 surface of the pelvis and trunk. Nine healthy participants performed 3 trials of treadmill locomotion when walking at self-selected speed (3.6-5.6 km/h), running at 70% (10.9-14.0 25 km/h) and 90% of maximal speed (14.0-18.0 km/h). Stride-by-stride linear and angular ROM 26 27 data were captured concurrently using the single depth-sensing camera running at 30Hz (KinectTM for Windows, Microsoft, USA) and a six-camera motion capture system at 100Hz 28 29 (Vicon MX13, Vicon Motion Systems, United Kingdom). Within subject correlation 30 coefficients between the practical and criterion method ranged from very large to nearly 31 perfect (r = 0.87-1.00) for the linear ROM. Correlation coefficients for the angular ROM ranged from moderate to very large (r = 0.41-0.80). The limits of agreement between the two 32 systems for linear movements was ≤ 9.9 mm at all velocities of gait and ≤ 4.6 degrees at all 33 34 velocities of gait. The single camera system using depth-sensing technology is capable of capturing linear pelvic and trunk ROM during treadmill locomotion with reasonable precision 35 when compared to the criterion method. Further improvements to the measurement of angles 36 37 and validation across a wider population are recommended.

38 **1. Introduction**

Biofeedback is an emerging tool in the management of injuries in at-risk groups. When a 39 biomechanical risk factor can be quantified and displayed to the participant it is possible to 40 address the underlying biomechanical problem (Crowell and Davis, 2011). The quantification 41 of risk factor variables requires a prospective study in which measurements are made in 42 injury-free participants at baseline, thus allowing modelling to take place in the follow-up 43 44 period. The strength of such statistical models depends on the number of injury events occurring in the follow-up period. Hence, large-scale baseline trials are a prerequisite even 45 when considering the more common musculoskeletal injuries (e.g. iliotibial band syndrome). 46

47 The pelvic and trunk regions form the proximal end of the lower kinetic chain and are 48 routinely assessed due to their reputed relationship with pelvic, spinal and lower limb pathologies (Liebenson, 2004; Sahrmann, 2002; Herrington, 2011). The surrounding core 49 musculature provides the control and stabilization necessary for efficient gait with abnormal 50 51 linear and/or angular oscillations of the pelvic and trunk regions during gait being implicated in, or symptomatic of, many musculoskeletal conditions (Saunders et al., 2005). An 52 53 accessible, valid and real-time method of kinematic analysis for quantifying pelvic and trunk movements may therefore be a useful tool in injury research (Vieira and Kumar, 2004; Dutta, 54 2012). To date several studies have presented protocols to quantify pelvic movements during 55 gait (Schache et al., 2002a; Schache et al., 2000). However, these are lab-based and time-56 consuming in terms of preparation, collection and analysis and restricted to relatively small-57 58 scale trials.

Depth-sensing cameras, such as the Kinect sensor (Microsoft[™], USA), may offer an 59 affordable and pragmatic alternative (Dutta, 2012). The Kinect sensor allows depth and 60 61 infrared images (640 by 480 pixels) to be collected simultaneously at 30 Hz with each pixel representing about 0.09 degrees in the image plane. The depth data, with an error ranging 62 from less than 0.2 mm at small (0.4 m) distances to 4 cm at large distances (5 m) 63 (Khoshelham & Elberink, 2012), are more precise than the better known skeletal tracking 64 data (Dutta, 2012). These depth arrays are currently being used in a range of disciplines and 65 recently in biomechanics research to measure foot kinematics (van den Herrewegen et al., 66 67 2014).

68 The aim of this study is to develop and evaluate the use of a single-camera system, based on 69 this technology, to quantify the 3-dimensional kinematics of the pelvic and trunk regions 70 during treadmill locomotion.

71 **2. Methods**

Nine male participants volunteered for the study (age 29.2 ± 4.2 y, height 182.9 ± 7.3 cm, 72 mass 84.5 ± 10.4 kg and body mass index 25.3 ± 3.1 kg/m²). The participants had no prior or 73 existing lower limb injury or neurological disorder affecting gait. Ethical approval was 74 75 obtained from Teesside University and written informed consent was obtained from all 76 participants. Participants attended the laboratory on two occasions. First, they undertook the 30-15 Intermittent Fitness Test (30-15 IFT) (Buchheit, 2005) which allowed the 77 determination of appropriate running speeds for the experimental trial by recording the 78 79 maximum running velocity reached at the end of the test (VIFT). On the second visit, participants completed trials (180s each) at 3 different speeds of locomotion which were: 80 walking at self-selected speed (3.6-5.6 km/h), running at 70% of VIFT (10.9-14.0 km/h) and 81 running at 90% of VIFT (14.0-18.0 km/h). 82

The depth-sensing camera (KinectTM for Windows, Version 1, Microsoft, USA) projects a 83 structured grid of infrared light into the field of view. The system is pre-programmed to 84 triangulate the reflections of this grid in order to determine camera-object distances on a 85 86 pixel-by-pixel basis. Our algorithm for 3-dimensional measurement involved the creation of a point cloud around the region of interest. In this example, retro-reflective markers (Figure 1a) 87 were used to create overexposed effects on the infrared image (Figure 1bi), thus allowing 88 89 marker centroids to be determined on a frame-by-frame basis using standard threshold procedures. Starting five pixels above the centroid, four scanlines (two vertical and two 90 91 horizontal) were superimposed on the depth image (Figure 1bi). The depth data along these 92 scanlines were then used to create a 42 point cloud around each marker (Figure 1bii, iii and 93 iv) with the mean depth being used as the camera-marker distance ($Z_{\rm L}$ [Figure 1a]). Using 94 trigonometry and field of view information supplied by the manufacturer (43 degrees vertical 95 and 57 degrees horizontal), the medial-lateral (X_L) and superior-inferior (Z_L) positions of the marker were calculated for all markers. The tracked data from the single-camera system was 96 97 to be compared with concurrently collected data from a commercially available six-camera 98 motion capture solution (Vicon MX13 and Vicon Nexus 1.7, Vicon Motion Systems, UK). 99 The six-camera system is a passive video based 3D motion capture system which was 100 calibrated prior to every session, following manufacturers' guidelines, to ensure image error 101 was below 0.18 mm.

102 In order to run both systems concurrently for the treadmill trials some compromises on the quality of the angular data had to be made. Notably, a commonly accepted model for the 3-103 dimensional kinematics of the pelvis (e.g. Kadaba et al. 1990) was not feasible due to 104 105 occlusion of the anterior markers by the arms, adipose tissue and the treadmill safety guard. An alternative approach using a posteriorly positioned cluster of orthogonally positioned 106 markers (Borhani et al., 2013) was tested but our tracking algorithm lacked the elegance to 107 108 separate very closely-positioned markers. Subsequently, we therefore had to compromise on quality of the data by using just two markers (30 mm in diameter) on each of the posterior 109 iliac spines and on each of the tenth ribs (Figure 1a). For both systems, the linear positions of 110 the pelvis and trunk were defined as the mid-points of the vectors joining left- and right-sided 111 markers. Angular positions were recorded as the angles these vectors made relative to the X-112 axis when projected onto the global XY and XZ planes (Figure 1a). These measures are 113 proxy measures of rotation and obliquity, respectively. Unfortunately, it was not possible to 114 derive measures of pelvic tilt (i.e. sagittal plane movements) or Euler angles as suggested by 115 Wu et al. (2002). This approach did, however, allow us to assess the potential of this simple 116 117 device for deriving angular data in addition to linear data.

Sampling frequency for the six-camera system was 100Hz and data from the single-camera 118 119 (approximately 30Hz) were upsampled to 100Hz using linear interpolation. Cameras for the 120 six-camera system were set at a height of 1.9 m. The height of the single-camera was 1.6 m (i.e. approximately the same level of the participants' posterior-superior iliac spines when 121 standing on the treadmill). The distance between the single-camera system and the participant 122 123 was between 1.0-3.6 m to ensure the highest quality field of view while maintaining accuracy (Dutta, 2012). For comparison purposes, an angular (+90°, +180°, 0°) and linear 124 125 transformation using the position of the single-camera in the global frame were applied to the data from the single camera system. The time-series over a 10 second period for the triaxial 126 linear (Figure 2a, b and c) and biplanar angular (Figure 2d and e) data were used to determine 127 the range-of-movements (ROM) on a stride-by-stride basis. Specifically, the beginning of a 128 129 gait cycle was identified at every 2nd point of inflexion on the superior-inferior time-series for the pelvis (Figure 2b). 130

131 A within-subject design (Weston et al., 2014) was used to determine the association between 132 the ROM data for the single- and six-camera systems. This design permits the analysis of within-subject changes by removing between-subject differences (Bland and Altman, 1995). 133 Confidence limits (90%) for the within-subject correlations were calculated as per Altman 134 and Bland (2011). The following scale of magnitudes was used to interpret the magnitude of 135 the correlation coefficients: <0.1, trivial; 0.1–0.3, small; 0.3–0.5, moderate; 0.5–0.7, large; 136 0.7–0.9, very large; >0.9, nearly perfect (Hopkins et al., 2009). Limits of Agreement (LoA) 137 (Bland and Altman, 1986) were also used to assess the agreement between the single- and 138 139 six-camera systems. This method allows for the systematic and random error to be analysed 140 between the two systems (Giavarina, 2015).

141 **3. Results**

142 All within subject correlations for the single- and six-camera systems are displayed in Table 1. Within subject correlations for the association between the single- and six-camera systems 143 when examining the linear ROM of the pelvis were nearly perfect for all directions and 144 speeds with the exception of the ROMs recorded in the anterior-posterior direction at the 145 fastest speed, which was very large (r = 0.89, 90% Confidence Limit: 0.76-0.96). Similarly, 146 147 nearly perfect correlations were found for the trunk with the exceptions of anterior-posterior movements when running at 70% of VIFT (r=0.90, CL: 0.76-0.96) and 90% of VIFT (r = 148 0.87, CL: 0.71-0.95). The correlations between the two systems in terms of angular ROMs 149 were less consistent ranging from moderate to large at self-selected walking and large to very 150 large when running. The agreement between the two systems (Table 2) for linear movements 151 is ≤ 9.9 mm at all velocities of gait and ≤ 4.6 degrees at all velocities of gait. Descriptive data 152 for the absolute linear and angular ROM for both systems are presented in Table 3. 153

154 **4. Discussion**

This study is based on the premise that kinematic data of the pelvis and trunk could 155 contribute to injury management and may facilitate gait retraining (e.g. Sharma et al., 2014; 156 Crowell and Davis, 2011). To do so, requires a prospective study which in turn requires a 157 system which is safe, rapid, easy-to-use and portable. The single-camera system described in 158 this study meets these requirements and the data it produces compares reasonably well with 159 the six-camera system for the degrees of freedoms tested. In addition, the absolute values 160 reported are comparable with previous literature. Superior-inferior and medial-lateral 161 movements of the pelvis (mean ROM 4.7 cm and 5.0 cm, respectively) during walking were 162 within the ranges (2.5-9.5 cm and 2.0-6.0 cm) reported by Thorstensson et al. (1982), 163 although the anterior-posterior movements (3.9 cm) were slightly higher. Transversal pelvic 164 rotations during walking $(6.3 \pm 1.8 \text{ degrees})$ match those reported by Staszkiewicz et al. 165 (2012) (6.3 \pm 2.5 degrees) for treadmill walking at 5 km/h. Similarly transversal pelvic 166 rotations during running $(9.3 \pm 2.1 \text{ degrees})$ were within the range reported in previous 167 studies (Kadaba et al., 1990; Saunders et al., 2005). Consistent with previous studies 168 (Saunders et al., 2005 and Crosbie et al., 1997), the data from the two systems showed 169 increases in ROM of the pelvic and trunk motion in all planes with an increase in walking 170 171 and running speed. Taken together this practical system may provide a useful tool for the objective assessment of the pelvis and trunk during treadmill locomotion. 172

There are important limitations with the current system and also with the research design. Despite reasonable agreement between the two systems in terms of angular ROM, it should be reiterated that the variables being reported here are necessarily simplified and do not meet the accepted standards (Wu et al., 2002). To address this shortfall in future will require additional markers, which in turn will necessitate improved tracking algorithms and/or additional sensors (e.g. Buganè et al., 2014). In order to ensure that intra-marker distances remain sufficient to avoid accentuating angular error it may be necessary to find new marker locations or improved versions of the camera (i.e. with a higher resolution). Secondly, it should also be noted that the single-camera system described in this study has been created specifically for the analysis of upright treadmill locomotion and thus could not be used for more complex movements. Thirdly, our sample was fairly homogeneous in terms of anthropometric variables and the system would need to be tested in a wider population which may include clinical or obese populations, for whom small abnormal movements and skin movements may be much more problematic (Schache et al., 2002b). Nonetheless, the posterior approach to measurement, as used in this system, appears to be more reliable than traditional kinematic models for these populations (Borhani et al., 2013).

In conclusion, this study has shown that the single depth-sensing camera system offers a pragmatic method for kinematic capture of the pelvic and trunk regions for most of the degrees of freedom tested. However, further research to address the highlighted limitations is recommended before being used for large-scale data collection and biofeedback applications.

193 Conflict of interest statement

194 None of the authors have a conflict of interest related to this work.

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Figure 1. The steps taken to collect data.

a) A stationary treadmill was positioned in the six-camera motion capture laboratory. The six cameras were positioned 3m apart surrounding the action. At the rear of the treadmill was the single depth-sensing camera positioned 1.6m above the floor and pointing towards the participant's posterior pelvic region. The participant was fitted with four retro-reflective markers located on the iliac spines and tenth ribs. Also shown are the coordinate systems (right-hand-rule) of the single camera system in grey (X_L, Y_L and Z_L) and the six-camerasystem in black (X,Y and Z).

b) The resulting infrared image of the 4 markers (i) showing the overexposed pixels and the scanlines
used to create the 3-dimensional point cloud around the perimeter of the marker. The resulting point cloud
shown from the posterior (ii), lateral (iii) and superior (iv) views. Also shown is the orientation of single-camera
local system.

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Figure 2. Time-series of data points taken over a 10 second interval for self-selected walking in the pelvis of one 330 of the participants. The single depth-sensing camera (black line) and the six-camera system (grey line). 331 Positional data in the medial-lateral (a), superior-inferior (b) and anterior-posterior directions (c). Angular 332 rotations are in the transversal (d) and coronal (e) planes.

Table 1.	Within subject correlation coefficients between the s	ix- and one-camera systems, reported with	90% Confidence Limits	and the magnitude of correlation coefficient descriptor.
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			Liı	Angular						
	Pelvis			Trunk			Pel	vis	Trunk	
<u>.</u>	Medial-lateral	Anterior- posterior	Superior- inferior	Medial-lateral	Anterior- posterior	Superior- inferior	Frontal	Transversal	Frontal	Transversal
Walking	0.97	0.96	0.92	0.99	0.91	0.88	0.41	0.41	0.57	0.66
	(0.93-0.99)	(0.91-0.99)	(0.82-0.97)	(0.96-1.00)	(0.79-0.96)	(0.73-0.95)	(0.02-0.69)	(0.03-0.69)	(0.23-0.79)	(0.36-0.84)
	Nearly Perfect	Nearly Perfect	Nearly Perfect	Nearly Perfect	Nearly Perfect	Very Large	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Large</i>	<i>Large</i>
70% VIFT	0.98	0.91	0.99	0.99	0.90	0.98	0.53	0.62	0.73	0.75
	(0.96-0.99)	(0.78-0.96)	(0.96-1.00)	(0.98-1.00)	(0.76-0.96)	(0.96-0.99)	(0.17-0.76)	(0.29-0.81)	(0.47-0.88)	(0.50-0.89)
	Nearly Perfect	Nearly Perfect	Nearly Perfect	Nearly Perfect	Very Large	Nearly Perfect	<i>Large</i>	<i>Large</i>	Very Large	Very Large
90% VIFT	0.99	0.89	0.95	1.00	0.87	0.99	0.61	0.59	0.80	0.79
	(0.98-1.00)	(0.76-0.96)	(0.88-0.98)	(0.99-1.00)	(0.71-0.95)	(0.96-1.00)	(0.28-0.81)	(0.25-0.80)	(0.58-0.91)	(0.57-0.91)
	Nearly Perfect	Very Large	Nearly Perfect	Nearly Perfect	Very Large	Nearly Perfect	<i>Large</i>	<i>Large</i>	Very Large	Very Large

 Table 2. Limits of Agreement between the single- and six-camera systems for linear (mm) and angular (degrees) movements (Bias ± 95% Confidence Intervals)

			Line	Angular (degrees)						
		Pelvis		Trunk			Pe	lvis	Trunk	
	Medial-lateral	Anterior- posterior	Superior- inferior	Medial-lateral	Anterior- posterior	Superior- inferior	Frontal	Transversal	Frontal	Transversal
Walking	-2.0 ± 1.6	-0.8 ± 3.9	-3.2 ± 1.9	-2.1 ± 1.3	-1.0 ± 5.0	-3.6 ± 1.9	-1.1 ± 2.2	-1.5 ± 1.2	-4.6 ± 5.9	-2.2 ± 4.9
70% VIFT	-2.5 ± 1.7	-3.4 ± 6.4	-7.9 ± 3.0	-3.3 ± 2.3	-9.4 ± 7.8	-5.4 ± 3.0	-1.6 ± 1.7	-1.1 ± 1.4	-3.2 ± 6.5	-0.3 ± 5.7
90% VIFT	-3.2 ± 2.7	-3.7 ± 7.9	-7.7 ± 2.3	-3.5 ± 2.0	-9.9 ± 8.5	-5.6 ± 2.3	-1.3 ± 1.5	-1.1 ± 1.2	-2.2 ± 5.9	-0.8 ± 5.3
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 Table 3. Absolute linear (mm) and angular amplitudes (degrees) for the single-camera systems (Mean ± Standard Deviation)

			L	Angular						
	Pelvis			Trunk			Pelvis		Trunk	
	Medial-lateral	Anterior- posterior	Superior- inferior	Medial-lateral	Anterior- posterior	Superior- inferior	Frontal	Transversal	Frontal	Transversal
Walking	50.4±15.7	39.3±8.2	46.8±9.8	55.6±19.3	35.0±7.0	48.7±8.5	10.5±1.1	6.3±1.8	15.7±3.9	9.9±2.1
70% VIFT	38.6±11.0	44.6±6.6	106.7±12.7	68.0±15.8	44.1±7.8	90.6±9.6	11.6±2.1	9.3±2.1	15.4±3.4	23.5±6.0
90% VIFT	50.4±12.1	44.7±5.7	99.7±12.6	75.5±16.9	43.3±8.2	84.9±10.5	12.0±2.1	9.4±2.2	17.5±3.8	26.9±5.9
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